

740 N. Fulgham Ct.
Visalia, CA 93291-4164
September 20, 1999

CALFED Bay-Delta Program
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155
Sacramento, CA 95814
Att: Rick Breitenbach

Dear Mr. Breitenbach:

As a professional who has spent his entire 34 year career in California and the past 27 years living and working in Tulare County, I'd like to stress the importance of water conservation to any successful water plan.

The goal of conservation could easily be accomplished through economic incentives. (Remember how we traded in those old '60s gas-guzzlers for higher-quality modern cars?)

At present residential water users - at least in Visalia - have no incentive to conserve. There are watering days (basically alternating days on opposite sides of the street), but a neighbor of mine doesn't turn his sprinklers off even during the rainy season! A property owner with a swimming pool pays the same rate as I do without one.

The politically feasible solution would be to keep flat rates for existing residential stakeholders, but require meters to be installed on a change of ownership. Over the years, I think you'd see a pronounced reduction in water consumption. (Those of us who lived through the droughts adapted quite well.) Preserving the availability of a flat rate structure for existing residential users would allow a politically acceptable introduction of meters for future stakeholders, when supplies will be more scarce.

Very truly yours,


John S. Higgins, Jr.